

Capital Punishment Issue Begins To Stir Up More Dust This Year

By VINCENT THOMAS
 Assemblyman, 68th District
 One familiar issue which is certain to stir up a lot of dust at our session is capital punishment. You will recall that only last year another attempt was made to abolish it, but the bill for the purpose did not come out of committee. Now there are several measures on the matter before us, so the pro and con debate will wax really hot.

A bill has been introduced in the Assembly which would provide a four-year moratorium on the death penalty. Two constitutional amendments have been introduced, one of which would entirely eliminate it, while the second would author-

ize its use when a person is convicted of two murders, or when a prison guard is killed. Adoption of either amendment by both houses would give the voters a chance at the 1962 election to say firmly and finally whether or not they want the death penalty continued.

The author of the two constitutional amendments says it is not his purpose to put both

before the voters. We will be free to decide which of the two should go on the ballot. He says he believes it to be an imposition on the Legislature to force it through a drive to abolish the death penalty almost every session, and feels the question should be decided by the people.

THE CELEBRATED case which created so much controversy last year was ended by the execution of its principal, but the issue involved will not be easily settled. There is some feeling that those who favor abolition may try to prevent

the issue from being taken to the people. It is argued that if our action last year in failing to approve an abolition bill truly reflects the will of the people, the inference may be drawn that they do not want capital punishment eliminated, so would vote against the proposal if given an opportunity.

Supporters of abolition are very active and very vocal, as witness their picketing the Capitol the first of this session. They also number some very influential people who could bring strong pressures to bear. But the question has been raised as to whether they could secure the necessary funds to carry on a hard-fought campaign to pass any constitutional amendment which might reach the ballot.

ONE THING seems fairly certain, and that is that our arguments over the issue will attract considerable attention outside our California borders. Opinions on the matter are not limited by state or national boundaries, and they will fly from all directions in the effort to influence our decisions. Whether an amendment is finally put on the ballot, debate will be heavy all over the state. When the time comes for committee consideration of any of the measures, our legislative halls will be thronged by interested persons.

Whatever our personal feelings on capital punishment may be, there is something so intensely emotional about the subject, that all of us react to it vigorously, one way or the other. Therefore, the outcome of our deliberations will be awaited with great interest by practically every voter in the state. The big question now before us is, will any abolition measure emerge from our legislative processes?

Area Camp Fire Girls to Observe 'Thank You Day' on January 24th

The Los Angeles Area Council of Camp Fire Girls joins with other Councils throughout the nation in making Tuesday, Jan. 24, "Thank you day" to the community for its support. Over 500 Council members and community leaders have reservations for the Council's annual dinner meeting in the Biltmore Bowl at 7 p.m. on the 24th. This meeting is the highlight of observance of Camp Fire Girls' Golden Jubilee throughout the nation.

members who have given outstanding service to the Los Angeles Area Council this past year.

Special awards will be presented to the members of the Golden Jubilee Committee for the planning and work given to make the observation of the organization's fiftieth birthday a memorable one in Los Angeles. Awards will be presented by Mrs. Edward Mills, chairman of the Annual Meeting Committee.

Dr. David B. Friedman, chairman of the Adult Membership Nominating Committee, will present the nominations of new Council officers and members of the Board of Directors.

DR. JOHN D. BRIGGS, Council president, will present a gift of Flame Trees (Erythrina) to Mayor Poulson, Ernest Debs, chairman of the Board of Supervisors, and Harold Henry, president pro tem of the Los Angeles City Council.

TEN AWARDS are being presented to business organizations and individuals who have performed outstanding services to the community. Award winners were selected by a committee of six under the chairmanship of Miss Vivian Osborn.

Valley M. Knudsen, member of the Camp Fire Girls Golden Jubilee Committee, and founding chairman of Los Angeles Beautiful, will describe the Flame Tree Forest project and Dr. Samuel Ayres will show dramatic color slides of Flame Trees in bloom. Los Angeles Camp Fire Girls are raising a forest of Flame Trees and will plant them in a city park later this year.

The coveted Luther Halsey Gulik and Seton awards from the Camp Fire Girls, Inc., are being presented to two Council

"Golden Years—A Little Review" with a cast of girls and adults, will depict historical highlights and deep values for girls found in membership in the Camp Fire Girls.

Child's Reading Inability Held In Spotlight

Today's reading holds the educational spotlight, according to a local reading school official. An ever-increasing number of high school students are failing to graduate, many of them either directly or indirectly because of reading disabilities.

Unemployed Benefits Not Extended Yet

Extended duration unemployment insurance benefits will not be payable under the Miller-Collier Act formula during January, February and March to Californians who exhaust their regular unemployment benefits.

Educators and businessmen alike are increasingly concerned. The same student who drops out of high school seeks and needs employment, but the fast pace of today's business world makes adequate reading ability an absolute necessity.

Irving H. Perluss, director of employment, said yesterday that, as had been anticipated, insured unemployment during the final quarter of 1960 fell just short of the six per cent ratio which triggers payment of extended duration benefits. Perluss said an average of 220,540 weeks of insured unemployment was certified during October, November, and December. This was 5.7 per cent of the statutory base of the average of 3,827,240 employees subject to the Unemployment Insurance Code in the four calendar quarters that ended June 30, 1960.

AS A POOR reader, a youth's chances of successful employment are hampered severely.

The Miller-Collier Act is an amendment to the unemployment insurance law enacted by the 1959 Legislature. It requires the director of employment to make a quarterly finding of the ratio of unemployment insurance claimed in California to all employment covered by the Unemployment Insurance Code.

A program to improve reading abilities currently is being offered by Kendale Reading Specialists, 3671 Newton St., Waltham. First established in 1957, this group of professional educators began a successful program which now has grown to include seven centers in the southwestern area of Los Angeles county.

Only quarter so far during which extended duration claims could be established was the second calendar quarter of 1960. Perluss said the current trend of the state national economy makes it appear virtually certain that extended duration benefits will be payable again later this year beginning in April.

Outstanding feature of the Kendale program is that no actual classes are conducted. Small groups comprised of five to seven students work together at one time, with more individual attention and carefully-guided competition.

Young Demos Install New Club Leaders

Celebrating the inauguration of the new President of the United States, the Torrance Democratic Youth club held a dinner meeting and program Wednesday evening at the home of Rose Sarukian, 3230 W. 179th St.

PHONICS ARE taught all students and good perception is developed through use of audiovisual devices. One of the most obvious impressions given a visitor of these groups is the interest shown by the individual student. "Interest is high," says Dale Boyce, a director and founder of Kendale, "because our students have found reading fascinating."

Installation of officers followed dinner. Installed were Don Aimar, president; Ann Carriere, secretary; Mike Griffin, treasurer; and Diane Somanian, historian.

Boyce said, "Our students are of all ages, but we start each one with success. He begins at his own reading level and progresses at his own rate. We incorporate the fundamentals of reading with the most exciting stories and methods we can conjure."

Guest speaker was Earl Griffin whose topic was "What Is a Democrat." Griffin is a member of the Adult Torrance Democratic club.

WE DON'T remind them of failures; they are usually painfully aware of these even when they won't say so — and we keep the atmosphere relaxed. Instructors are called by their first names. But lastly and most important, we teach."

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